

1 What is claimed is:

2 CLAIMS

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4 1. A system for managing a multiple server computer system on a computer network, the
5 system comprising:

6 a central management server;
7 one or more remote nodes connected to the central management server;
8 a distributed task facility, running on the central management server, that assigns and
9 monitors system management tasks on the remote nodes; and
10 an agent, running on each remote node, that executes system management tasks and
11 initiates contact with the central management server to report the properties of the remote
12 node on which it is running.

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14 2. The system of claim 1, wherein the agent further comprises:

15 a task module that executes tasks assigned to the agent by the distributed
16 task facility;
17 a properties module that gathers information describing properties of a
18 remote node on which the agent is running; and
19 a reporting module that initiates and executes reporting of the status of the
20 agent to the distributed task facility.

21 3. The system of claim 2, wherein the reporting module reports the properties of the remote
22 node to the distributed task facility by passing a properties object to the distributed task facility.

23
24 4. The system of claim 2, wherein the properties of the remote node includes the status of the
25 agent and of the remote node on which it is running.

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27 5. The system of claim 3, wherein the properties object comprises a Java object.

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6. A method for managing a multiple server computer system on a computer network, the method comprising the steps of:

- executing an agent on a remote node;
- creating a properties object containing values for certain properties of the remote node on which the agent is executing;
- an agent initiating contact with a central management server; and
- the agent passing the properties object from the agent to the central management server, whereby the agent reports the properties of the remote node on which it is executing to the central management server.

7. The method of claim 6, wherein the creating step comprises specifying the status of the agent and of the remote node on which it is executing.

8. The method of claim 7, further comprising creating a properties file on the remote node containing data describing the certain properties of the remote node on which the agent is executing, wherein the properties object is created using the values of the data contained in the properties file.

9. The method of claim 7, wherein the initiating contact step comprises the agent initiating contact with a distributed task facility on the central management server.

10. The method of claim 7, wherein the passing step comprises passing the properties object from the agent to the distributed task facility.

11. The method of claim 7, further comprising the steps of:

- writing the contents of the properties object to a central properties file on the central management server;
- making the central properties file available to a node manager module executing on the central management server;

1 logging the transaction between the distributed task facility and the agent to a log
2 manager module; and

3 checking for any outstanding tasks previously assigned to the agent for which the
4 distributed task facility is still awaiting a response from the agent.
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6 12. The method of claim 7, further comprising initiating the executing step upon restarting
7 operation of the remote node upon which it resides.
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9 13. The method of claim 7, further comprising initiating the executing step following a hardware
10 system upgrade to the remote node upon which it resides.
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12 14. The method of claim 7, further comprising initiating the executing step following an upgrade
13 or patch to the operating system software on the remote node upon which it resides.
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15 15. A computer readable medium on which is embedded a program, the program comprising
16 modules that execute a method for managing a multiple server computer system on a computer
17 network, the method comprising the steps of:

18 executing an agent on a remote node;

19 creating a properties object containing values for certain properties of the remote
20 node on which the agent is executing;

21 an agent initiating contact with a central management server; and

22 the agent passing the properties object from the agent to the central management
23 server, whereby the agent reports the properties of the remote node on which it is executing
24 to the central management server.
25

26 16. The computer readable medium of claim 15, wherein the properties of the remote node
27 includes the status of the agent and of the remote node on which it is executing.
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17. The computer readable medium of claim 16, further comprising creating a properties file on the remote node containing data describing the certain properties of the remote node on which the agent is executing, wherein the properties object is created using the values of the data contained in the properties file.

18. The computer readable medium of claim 16, wherein the initiating contact step comprises the agent initiating contact with a distributed task facility on the central management server.

19. The computer readable medium of claim 16, further comprising passing the properties object from the agent to the distributed task facility.

20. The computer readable medium of claim 16, further comprising the steps of:
- writing the contents of the properties object to a central properties file on the central management server;
 - making the central properties file available to a node manager module executing on the central management server;
 - logging the transaction between the distributed task facility and the agent to a log manager module; and
 - checking for any outstanding tasks previously assigned to the agent for which the distributed task facility is still awaiting a response from the agent.